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ABSTRACT

This report is a partial revision of an earlier report, released in the spring of 1989, that described programs in which young adolescents engaged in community service. The first chapter of the present report discusses the benefits that accrue to society and early adolescents when early adolescents engage in community service. The review process that was used to select model programs for case studies is discussed in the second chapter. The third chapter profiles the programs, which include three programs that involve peer tutoring; three in which students counsel peers; one in which students mediate student conflicts; three involving partnerships between students and other groups, such as senior citizens; four that provide opportunities for adolescents to engage in multiple forms of community service; and one program, no longer operating, that used community service to develop adolescents' leadership skills. In the fourth chapter, the case studies are analyzed in terms of appropriate roles for early adolescents in community service, and the common elements of, and obstacles faced by, the programs. The fifth chapter offers a series of recommendations for encouraging adolescent participation in community service and notes the establishment of the National Center for Service Learning in Early Adolescence. Lists of 25 references and 11 resources for information on service programs are provided. (BC)

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Connections: Service Learning in the Middle Grades

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Introduction

Although barely two years have elapsed since this report was first published in June, 1989, there have been significant changes in middle schools. Turning Points, the report on the Education of Young Adolescents issued by the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, was released in the spring of 1989. It made a strong case for service learning, and called for extensive changes in the way we educate young adolescents, both in and out of school. Thanks to this report, and the work of various other foundations, national education organizations, and government agencies, this period has witnessed the growth of support for incorporating community service into the programs of schools that serve young adolescents. The developing interest in the kinds of programs described in Connections found us faced with a need for a second printing by the summer of 1990; this gave us an opportunity to revisit some of the programs that appeared in the original report, and to update some of the information that was included. While the main body of this edition is in large part a reprint of the earlier work, some changes have been made, reflecting changes in personnel or in program content, the disappearance of some projects, and the growth or replication of others.

This report owes its existence not only to the many individuals who contributed to the original version, but to those who followed through for this edition in order to ensure that it continues to be a useful and timely reference. The case studies and additional program descriptions are the product of countless hours of thoughtful preparation, interviews, observations, reviews of materials, and both formal and informal discussions. But beyond the careful and patient work of project staff and the generosity of those in the field who shared their accomplishments, concerns, and advice, this booklet is a symbol. It represents a recognition of the unique nature of early adolescence and a commitment to the role of community service in the positive development of young people as they move through the early adolescent years.

This report presents the rationale for service learning during early adolescence, case studies of 15 programs, the criteria and process used to identify the models included, analysis of the common elements and obstacles in these programs, and recommendations for both policy-makers and program administrators. References and organizational resources are included at the end of the report.

Underlying all the information, discussion, and analysis that follow is a two-part belief: in the ability of young adolescents to make genuine, lasting, and responsible contributions to their communities and schools through service programs; and in the value of such programs to the educational and ethical development of the youngsters who participate. The programs described here are not just curricular "add-ons" or after-school supervision for young people, despite the fact that many still have precarious institutional status; these programs truly demonstrate that young adolescents can provide as well as receive service and that both they and their communities benefit as a result.

We are indebted to the Carnegie Corporation of New York, whose support enabled us to undertake and publish the original survey, and to produce this updated version. Alice Angell, formerly a staff member of the Early Adolescent Helper Program, Dr. Marjorie Hendler,

consultant, and Diane Harrington, principal author, were involved in every step of the original report, from formulating and testing the questionnaires and interview formats, through site visits, to written program reviews. Diana Bianco and Rebecca Lieberman took on the painstaking task of updating the current edition.

Above all our thanks go to those in the field -- the school administrators, community agency staff members, teachers, the "clientele" whom the young people serve -- for their unfailing good will and cooperation. We were welcomed at every site visit; busy people repeatedly took time to talk at length about their work, and to review our description to ensure accuracy. Diverse as they are, these programs share some elements, and perhaps the most striking are the enthusiasm of the participants -- young people and adults alike -- and their desire to share their experiences and to learn about the experiences of others. We thank especially the young volunteers who are the center of each of these programs; not only are they the most convincing argument for the value of youth service, but their thoughtful discussions and their willingness to participate in interviews gave the stamp of authenticity to this report. We hope that these accounts will be useful for practitioners and for those who shape policy.

When Connections was first issued two years ago, we expressed the hope that it would be "the precursor of an ongoing project, a clearinghouse of community service and service learning programs that involve young adolescents, and a resource center that will provide technical assistance and facilitate the exchange of information and materials." With major support from the DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund, that hope has become a reality. We urge readers of this publication and others to keep us informed of exemplary programs, to avail themselves of our resources, and to join our network of practitioners, researchers and supporters of service learning.

Joan Schine
Director
National Center for Service Learning in Early Adolescence

CHAPTER 1: RATIONALE

Youth and Community Service

Adolescents who help to care for young children, who assist those with handicaps, tutor their peers or younger children, visit the aging, mediate playground disputes, counsel troubled peers, organize campaigns to register voters or to clean up streams are filling the void that our age of technology and specialization has created in their lives.

Harold Howe delineates the dilemma faced by most young people in the United States today:

> In a society based on the work ethic, work helps to define each one of us. To the extent that we do something useful to the society, we gain a feeling of belonging and contributing that sustains us even when the work we do is difficult or dull ... [Y]outh has been progressively denied the opportunity to be engaged in work that is important to others and therefore denied the rewards such work produces. I think that some of youth's negative tendencies today can be traced to this situation. (Howe, 7)

Through community service, however, young people assume meaningful roles and respond to the real needs of others -- as well as to their own need to be needed.

Historically, we have depended upon volunteers for a wide range of services in our communities. The need for such services continues and will probably increase in the years ahead. Women, once the mainstay of volunteer efforts, are entering the labor force in greater and greater numbers. Moreover, values appeared to be shifting away from helping others with the emergence of what many have called the "Me Generation." But many communities have found in their young people an untapped reservoir of energy and compassion. Experiencing the satisfactions of making a contribution in the teen years not only benefits the communities in which these young people live, but may also encourage a lifelong commitment to volunteering.

Assuming meaningful roles benefits youth as well. Increased self-esteem and a sense of accomplishment accompany service to others. Through community service, young people can also explore careers and workplaces, learn the attitudes and behaviors of the world of work. They are challenged to work collegially with others, to compromise, to communicate successfully. They are encouraged to acquire and exercise new skills. They are presented with "real world" chances to confront problems, consider alternatives, and find solutions.

Educators, youth workers (including members of the juvenile justice system), and observers of society express anxiety about the growing alienation of our young people. The media focus on "at-risk" youth (the dropout, the school failure, the runaway, the drug user or seller, the teen parent) obscures the fact that all too many "well-adjusted" young people are also prey to negative forces. Both cause and effect of this alienation is the pervasive negative image of today's adolescent. But when young people become involved in community service, the "we/they" stereotypes of both young and old are replaced by new perceptions and understandings.

The Young Adolescent and Community Service

This report will demonstrate that even the youngest adolescents can play active, contributing roles in their communities. In recent years, awareness of the unique needs and traits of the 11 to 14 year old has grown. The work of Joan Lipsitz and colleagues at the Center for Early Adolescence at the University of North Carolina, of Conrad Toepfer, Jacquelynne Eccles, and others underscores the importance of understanding these needs when designing programs and experiences for this age group:

> Sound program planning must respond, not to some general notion of what they are like, but to the specific needs of their stage of development. In differentiating between early and late adolescence, we must recognize that there are few absolutes in human development. The differences are largely a matter of proportion and emphasis, but in the aggregate they are significant. (Schine, Shoup, and Harrington, 2)

Early adolescence is characterized primarily by change. Physical change is the most obvious, but many other changes are typical of this period as well: shifting interests; the loosening of ties to parents; the intensified importance of peer relationships; the beginning of the move from what Piaget calls concrete to abstract thinking; periods of extreme self-doubt; unpredictable and swift changes in mood; a dawning idealism and altruism, often seemingly at odds with a new self-absorption; a desire to reach out to adults other than parents and teachers; a drive to test values and to try on new roles. In the midst of such turmoil, so much that is unfamiliar although peculiarly personal, it is no wonder that the emerging adolescent seems often to be out of control or disconnected from the immediate scene.

It is possible, however, to help the early adolescent focus his or her energy and growth. Community service is uniquely suited to this, as it draws together some of the inherent developmental inconsistencies of this age group:

> Early adolescents are attempting to establish a sense of who they are. They are searching for role models and possible careers. They find it hard to establish a sense of purpose in a society that seems to have no use and no liking for them ... Morally, they are idealistic but impatient with what seem to be flaws in the fabric of social justice. They are generous to others less fortunate and will often work hard to help them. (Schonhaut, 18)

Involvement in community service can meet many of the special needs of the early adolescent. Before examining appropriate roles and projects for the middle or junior high school youngster, it will help to keep those needs in mind:

--to test and discover new skills;
--to develop a sense of competence, an antidote to the self-doubt of this period;
--to socialize, to test themselves as social creatures;
--to discover a place for themselves in the world, to create a vision of a personal future;

--to take part in the world of adults, but also to retreat to a world of their peers;
--to know a variety of adults, representative of different backgrounds; and occupations, including potential role models;
--to test developing value systems in authentic situations;
--to speak and be heard, to know that they can make a difference;
--to see tangible or visible outcomes of their projects;
--to be recognized for their accomplishments;
--to have opportunities to make real decisions, with appropriate limits;
--to be supported and guided by adults who appreciate their problems and their promise.

Middle School Reform

Virtually everyone who works with early adolescents agrees that reform is urgently needed at the junior high or middle school level. Agreement about the nature of that reform is harder to find. Given what we know about the developmental needs and characteristics of early adolescence, however, it is evident that the answer does not lie in more of the same -- the "get tough" emphasis on academic content advocated in some quarters. A wide variety of approaches will need to be introduced; some will be adopted, others discarded. No single formula or program will meet all needs nor serve all among the diverse population in our public schools.

Every student, regardless of intellectual ability, career aspirations, or family background, will need to be equipped for living in the twenty-first century, in an environment and society we cannot today envision. The National Association of Secondary School Principals has characterized the middle school's role in this way:

> The content of today's curriculum serves primarily to develop intellectual habits and capacities that are likely to be applicable to other times and settings. The curriculum must balance skill development with content coverage, which may be outdated before it is used. To prepare youth for the future, the middle level school curriculum must develop intellectual skills and *an understanding of humankind that will permit the student to gather information, organize it in a meaningful fashion, evaluate its veracity and utility, form reasonable conclusions about it, and plan for individual and collective action.* (NASSP, 5, emphasis added)

Community service, far more than any discrete academic subject area, can help the student to develop that understanding, will challenge him or her to collect and analyze relevant information, and to plan and take action. The service experience and the academic curriculum together can provide for the student a more coherent and balanced school experience than even the best classroom-bound course of study.

There are indications that the current reform wave will at least attempt to create this balance. In 1988 New York State issued a Draft Policy Statement on Middle-Level Education and Schools with Middle-Level Grades. That statement recognizes and lists explicitly the

developmental traits of this age group. It calls for "opportunities within the school program [for middle school students] to develop as individuals," and suggests further, "Schools enrolling middle-level students should ... have schedules with flexible time assignments within blocks of time to encourage interdisciplinary programs and creative time use." (New York State Education Department, 5)

A number of reports, including one in 1988 by the Children's Defense Fund (CDF), also recommend flexible scheduling for the middle grades. CDF, in addition, urges schools to emphasize "active" learning and to provide students with "numerous opportunities to relate school and what they are learning to their lives." (Children's Defense Fund, 8)

While there is evidence that some of these recommendations have found their way into practice, budgetary constraints and a tendency to rely on achievement test scores as indicators of a school's effectiveness may retard widespread implementation of these reforms.

Values Education

"There is a genuine crisis in our society and schools that is receiving far too little attention -- a crisis in caring," writes Nel Nodding of Stanford University (Education Week, 12/7/88). Across the political spectrum, from the US Department of Education to the local school building, from teachers' unions to concerned parents, those who agree with her have called for schools to reassert their historical role of teaching values to young people:

> At a time when the traditional structures of caring have deteriorated, schools must become places where teachers and students live together, talk with each other, take delight in each other's company. My guess is that when schools focus on what really matters in life, the cognitive ends we now pursue so painfully and artificially will be achieved somewhat more naturally. (Nodding 1988)

The dramatic rises in teen pregnancy, drug use, crime, suicide, and dropping out of school, according to David Hornbeck, prove that the crisis is reaching desperate proportions. Hornbeck agrees that values education is the business of schools:

> Learning to care ... has a place in the public schools. It should not be considered extracurricular. It should be treated as a fundamental part of any self-respecting school that is attempting to nurture young people in their initial quest toward an effective and satisfying adulthood. (Hornbeck, 11-12)

Which values should be taught is a matter for controversy. Some reformers emphasize personal character: values such as integrity, honesty, self-discipline. Others, like Nodding, stress interpersonal relationships: caring, respect for others, valuing human diversity. Still others underscore the importance of learning to be a good citizen: "Regardless of whatever fad currently preoccupies educators, developing the attitudes and skills for democratic living continues as one of the major goals of education." (Lipka, Beane, and O'Connell, 7) And some,

like Hornbeck, believe that all of these different emphases can be subsumed under the concept of "caring about others and acting like it." (Hornbeck, 7)

Community service can play a unique role in developing all of these values. It not only offers young people opportunities to assume helping roles, demonstrating their capacity to care for others; good programs also provide chances to practice and reflect on these roles, ensuring that new values are internalized. As the Children's Defense Fund points out, the goal is to enable "students to personalize such values and to make reasoned moral and ethical choices." (Children's Defense Fund, 9)

In addition, community service is active learning: "Just reading and talking about [values] is not enough. To learn, really learn, the whys and hows of citizenship requires real and active experience." (Lipka, Beane, and O'Connell, 7) Hornbeck agrees:

> I believe a thoughtful community service program is the single most important component of a first-rate values education program. My reason for that assertion is that nearly all human beings learn best by doing, not by being told or reading ... Values, and particularly the notion of caring about others and acting like it, are particularly conducive to being taught by doing. (Hornbeck, 10)

CHAPTER 2: THIS SURVEY

Overview

This survey began to explore the extent, types, and quality of community service programs involving early adolescents throughout the nation. While far from comprehensive, it has confirmed one underlying assumption: the number of such programs has grown considerably in recent years, as has recognition of the value of community service in promoting positive youth development.

The project research team identified and explored dozens of programs, widely varied in type as well as quality and emphasis. Some programs have received attention in the media or at conferences and symposia; others are scarcely known beyond the immediate community but are every bit as effective and worthy of replication.

Seven programs were selected by the original research team as models of appropriate service learning for this age group and are described in some detail in the following pages. These programs are:

--Friendly PEERsuasion, a substance abuse prevention program in several cities including Arlington, Texas and Worcester, Massachusettes

--The Peer Counseling Program in Oakland, California

--Resolving Conflict Creatively, a peer mediation program in New York City

--The Jones-Village Partnership Program, in which youngsters are paired with senior citizens in Upper Arlington, Ohio

--The Early Adolescent Helper Program, in which young adolescents play several helping roles in New York City and other cities

--The Community Service Program in Shoreham, New York, in which all middle school students perform a variety of services

--The Youth Leadership Program for "problem students" in Camden, New Jersey

Eight additional programs are sketched in less detail, each following the major case study in which young people play similar roles. These programs are:

--Project Humanity, a peer tutoring program in Minneapolis, Minnesota

--The Valued Youth Program, a peer tutoring program for dropout-prone youngsters in San Antonio, Texas

--Peer Counselors in Indianapolis, Indiana

--The Peer Counseling Program in Palo Alto, California

--Waves: People and Culture on the Lower East Side, a folklife research and community partnership project in New York City

--Magic Me, in which youngsters are paired with senior citizens in Baltimore, Maryland

--The HUGSS Program (Helping Us Grow through Service and Smiles), a multiple service program in Colorado Springs, Colorado

--Youth Volunteers, a multiple service program in 4-H clubs throughout New York state.

Criteria

The project research team began by defining essential program characteristics, recognizing that some flexibility would be necessary in looking at programs for this age group. A basic assumption was that programs in which young people perform service for at least several weeks, not just once or twice, would be more valuable for participants. The team agreed to look for a variety of programs, with different service activities, in diverse geographic areas, involving individuals from a variety of ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. It also decided to give priority to programs in urban settings where young people's needs are so urgent and intense. Finally, it decided that the models being sought were programs that:

--allow young people to perform services recognized as "real" by both themselves and those they serve

--give adolescents genuine responsibilities and hold them accountable

--provide opportunities for youngsters to practice decision-making and problem-solving, individually and collectively

--include a strong learning component, with opportunity for training and reflection

--are guided by adult facilitators sensitive to and knowledgeable about young adolescents and committed to helping them mature

Because the public school is the one institution in our society that touches every child, school-based programs were emphasized. But, recognizing that community agencies can reach some children who, for various reasons, will never be drawn into school-sponsored programs, and that they often operate under fewer constraints than do schools, some programs in these agencies were also examined.

The Process

Beginning in March, 1988, initial inquiries were mailed to various public and private agencies, school districts, individuals, and selected national organizations. Two letters of inquiry were used, accompanied by a brief form for program information: one for school-related programs, one for those based in other organizations.

Data collection instruments were developed, based on the essential program characteristics and general program information. The research team reviewed, pilot-tested, and revised these instruments before using them.

Following up on responses to initial inquiries and other leads, information was first collected by telephone, usually by appointment and often requiring two sessions of 45 minutes to one hour. This was supplemented by a review of program materials submitted by the person interviewed. By mid-June, when most school-related programs were closing for the summer, dozens of programs had been contacted, interviewed, and preliminarily assessed.

In the fall of 1988, programs that were seen as potential models were visited by at least one member of the research team. The seven major case studies presented in this report were all validated through observations and on-site interviews with participants. For the current edition (1991), all programs cited in the original were invited to update or amend their descriptions. As a result, some case studies have been revised, while others were supplemented with new material.

Limitations

Because of limited time and resources, the research team recognizes that this survey only scratches the surface. A number of other promising programs have been located throughout the research process; these will need to be explored in greater depth in the future. Many more programs will surface, no doubt, as this report is disseminated. Without exception, program representatives contacted by the research team were enthusiastic, not only about showcasing their own work, but also about the possibility of establishing a clearinghouse for information and technical assistance (see page 52 for a description of the National Center for Service Learning in Early Adolescence).

CHAPTER 3: THE CASE STUDIES

Peer Tutoring Programs

FRIENDLY PEERSUASION
Girls Incorporated of Worcester
Worcester, Massachusetts

Since 1988, more than 320 girls have participated in a a substance abuse education program run by Girls Inc. of Worcester. The Friendly PEERsuasion project is based on a national model where "PEERsuaders," adolescent girls aged 10 to 14, teach "PEERsuade-Mes," 6-to-10-year old boys and girls, how to avoid drug and alcohol abuse. Their titles are a source of pride to the girls -- a badge of participation in a program which gives them both fun and increased self-respect.

With funding from the federal Office for Substance Abuse Prevention of the Alcohol, Drug Abuse and Mental Health Administration, Friendly PEERsuasion was initially piloted by Girls Inc. (formerly Girls' Clubs of America) in five cities: Arlington, Texas; Birmingham, Alabama; Clearwater, Florida; Rapid City, South Dakota; and Worcester, Massachusetts. During the three-year pilot, more than 1,000 PEERsuaders reached out to approximately 3,000 PEERsuade-Mes. According to the Girls Inc. National Resource Center, 50% of Girls Inc. centers currently are replicating the project; Worcester is one of the pilot cities that has continued the program, using local funding and resources. The goal of the program is to encourage girls to choose healthy alternatives to substance abuse. To achieve this, girls learn decision-making skills, build peer and community support networks, and increase their cooperation and leadership skills through their work as PEERsuaders.

The program in Worcester, offered at three schools, takes place during the school day. Students receive the 14 hours of training required to become a PEERsuader. Training is conducted by local Girls Inc. staff who also supervise the students in their teaching. The curriculum, distributed by the Girls Inc. national office along with workbooks and a teaching kit, relies heavily on "active" or "discovery" learning: activities like role playing, skits, simulation exercises, or puppetry, followed by group discussions. The girls focus on topics such as communication, resisting peer pressure, information about drugs, refusal skills, community resources, and leadership.

During their training, PEERsuaders, in teams of two to four, with guidance from staff, create lesson plans for teaching groups of up to ten PEERsuade-Mes, choosing their own topics, teaching approach, and activities. These sessions usually total four to five hours and focus on decision-making and information about drugs. Then they are ready for their first audience. In a recent session at the Worcester affiliate, two seventh grade PEERsuaders were leading a discussion with a group of first and second grade PEERsuade-Mes. The topic was stress management. One activity involved a bunch of balloons. PEERsuaders instructed their young charges to think of stressful situations, and each time they did, to pop a balloon to release the stress. Everyone found this fun and an enlightening activity. If PEERsuaders need guidance during a session, they can always turn to their group leader, who is present at each teaching

session. After they begin teaching, PEERsuaders continue to meet as a group with an adult to talk about any problems or successes they are experiencing in their work.

Celebrations at the conclusion of teaching PEERsuade-Mes are held at times convenient for working parents, in order to bring the girls' parents into the program, too. Usually the girls present short skits demonstrating what they have learned, and each receives individual recognition for her participation. Dr. Shirley Carter, coordinator of the program in Worcester, sees tremendous growth in the PEERsuaders. She says they are proud to be leaders. PEERsuaders concur, saying they enjoy teaching little kids and like having the ability to help others.

A recent important addition to the Worcester program is community service. Once students become certified PEERsuaders, they can participate in after-school community service activities at a variety of placements including day care programs, the public library, and a local medical center.

A professional evaluation of the pilot project in Birmingham was recently completed by Abt Associates, a social service research firm. The evaluation found that Friendly PEERsuasion had a discernible effect in delaying the onset of substance abuse common among this age group. The program is also popular with participants: during the study, attendance was high and girls reported learning something from the majority of activities in the curriculum. The program, according to the evaluation, is "...giving them (the girls) a push in the right direction..."

The Worcester program is itself going in the right direction. Future plans call for Friendly PEERsuasion to be offered to all seventh grade girls at every school in Worcester. The program will also expand to other community agencies.

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PROJECT HUMANITY

Folwell Junior High School
Minneapolis, Minnesota

"They multiply my hands by 12," says special education teacher Thad Kranz of the seventh and eighth graders who work in his class as peer tutors, 12 at a time, each week. These young volunteers teach his 12-to-16-year-old TMR (trainable mentally retarded) students how to count money, tell time, read key safety words, and communicate with peers. Sometimes, amid much laughter, they play games like "Charades" to reinforce the functional concepts they're working on. Some peer tutors escort their students to lunch, helping them integrate into the mainstream of junior high school life.

Kranz began the program in 1984 with Fred McNair, since deceased, a social studies teacher. Over the program's first four years, it involved close to 300 peer tutors. Originally several of McNair's social studies classes participated each year; now roughly two dozen volunteers from throughout the school are released from class with their teachers' permission.

Kranz provides extensive training and writes weekly comments about individual tutors' work. With the help of paraprofessional Mary Ann Dalbey, he also prepares detailed lesson plans for each tutoring session. Tutors quickly learn techniques of communicating with and assessing the progress of their special students.

After the death of his colleague, Kranz looked around for a new partner and found Fresh Force, a Minneapolis youth service organization. "They give the kids more recognition than I can," says Kranz of the receptions, tee shirts, and other incentives Fresh Force provides. Despite the value of this, Kranz points out, some aspects of the program worked better under the old system. Timely reflection and follow-up were possible in McNair's social studies classes, while now Kranz is able to schedule meetings with the tutors as a group only two or three times a year.

Benefits to both tutors and TMR students far outweigh any disadvantages, however. Research documenting that handicapped students learn better from their peers is substantiated by this program, according to Kranz. In addition, his students, usually isolated from the rest of the school, have chances to interact with peers and make friends to talk with in the halls. Tutors, many of whom are not academic "stars," gain confidence and self-respect, as well as public recognition, from doing something needed and valued.

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VALUED YOUTH PROGRAM

Center for the Prevention and Recovery of Dropouts
Intercultural Development Research Association
San Antonio, Texas

Since 1984, the Valued Youth Program has kept almost 800 students in school, students who were at a potential 50-60 percent risk of leaving school. The program's success is based on the idea of valuing "at-risk" middle school youth--those with a high potential of dropping out--by placing them in positions of responsibility as tutors of younger, elementary students and paying them a minimum wage stipend for participation in the program. "Consequently, the student tutors improve their own skills as they teach basic skills to younger students," says Dr. Maria del Refugio Robledo, director of the Valued Youth Program.

The curriculum also includes field trips for tutors and their elementary tutees, as well as presentations by community role models, business and government leaders who have similar cultural and economic backgrounds of the tutor. Further, empirically-validated research has found that the tutors stayed in school, improved their basic academic skills, increased their self-pride, had fewer disciplinary referrals and developed a better attitude toward school and teachers.

The Valued Youth Program, developed by the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) of San Antonio, Texas, has been implemented, monitored and evaluated in eight school districts, fourteen secondary schools and fourteen elementary schools in the past seven years. In 1984, the program was funded by Coca-Cola USA through 1988, and by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Bilingual and Minority Language Affairs from 1988-1990. Last year, the Coca-Cola Foundation awarded IDRA a grant to replicate the Valued Youth Program in other sites in Texas, California, New York, and Florida during the next five years. Moreover, the Valued Youth Program was recently approved by the U.S. Department of Education's Program Effectiveness Panel. This approval, given only to a select number of programs, acknowledges the effectiveness of the project.

IDRA is a non-profit research and development organization dedicated to enhancing equal educational opportunities for all children. It has worked toward eliminating the obstacles that minority, economically-disadvantaged and limited-English-speaking students encounter in schools.

<u>FOR MORE INFORMATION:</u>

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PEER COUNSELING PROGRAM

McChesney Junior High School
Oakland, California

A commitment to peer counseling underlies our commitment to the education of the total person.

--Ed Lamb and Ron Rosenbaum, Peer Counseling: A Viable Approach to Teen Issues

For ten years, McChesney Junior High School in Oakland, California, has operated a peer counseling program in which trained ninth graders counsel fellow students, grades seven through nine. "When struggling with their sense of confusion, loneliness, or alienation, who do these young people turn to? ... [M]ost turn to their own peer groups. Using this obvious resource in a productive and effective manner is the key to peer counseling," write program developers Ron Rosenbaum, guidance counselor at McChesney, and Ed Lamb, facilitator of Project Success (a system-wide independent study and counseling program for at-risk youth).

Three counselors-in-training -- ninth graders who have completed three of ten training sessions required to become peer counselors -- reflect on the program and why they joined it. They personify Oakland's multi-ethnic population.

> "I saw some of the ninth graders who were peer counselors [last year] talking to kids and helping," says the first. "It looked like a good feeling."
>
> "I always wanted to help people," agrees another. "And after seeing one [peer counselor] talking with kids, I just decided that's something I want to do. I had a friend who was a counselor last year."
>
> "I guess you want to help people," adds the third, "to make someone feel better."

Students who apply to the program attend four preliminary training/orientation sessions in the spring of eighth grade. Lamb and Rosenbaum then interview them and select those who will continue the training. About 38 students participated in the spring, 1988, pre-training; some 17 were selected to continue. Over the ten years of the program's existence, applications per year have varied from about 30 to more than 100 students.

Lamb comments that peer counselors are not by any means the "stars" in the school. "In fact, the program often places kids with problems in the peer counselor role, at least in part to help them gain insights into their own situations and to give them coping skills," he notes.

The peer counselors meet with Lamb and/or Rosenbaum every Wednesday on a rotating schedule (first period one week, second period the next, and so forth) so that no class is missed

more than once every five or six weeks. When training is complete, they continue meeting to process what they have done, discuss referrals and look at alternate ways to solve problems. "People think peer counselors can handle everything," comments one youngster. "It's not so. You can present a problem at the meeting and get advice."

Training sessions stress communication (verbal and non-verbal), listening, and questioning skills through role playing, simulation exercises, group discussion, and other activities. Counselors learn how to help peers define their issues and come up with solutions themselves. "The problem they bring you might not be the real problem," one points out. "Like they might say it's a problem with the peer group, but really there are problems at home or maybe it's something they're doing themselves. When people are having problems, they don't usually think they're at fault."

"And like when they're not making sense -- blabbering a lot -- we learn to reflect back what they've said to help them make sense," adds another. "It's also a way to show them you're really listening."

After they complete the training, these peer counselors will visit homerooms throughout the school, in pairs, to introduce themselves and describe the kind of support they offer. "We don't give advice," stresses one of the counselors-in-training. "I used to give a lot of advice. Now I make a question and get them to understand the problem and find an answer." This, according to Lamb, is a key to successful peer counseling.

Another rule emphasized by these youngsters is confidentiality, for training and counseling sessions alike. Whatever goes on stays "in the room."

"It's hard enough to talk with someone," one of them says. "Promising confidentiality makes them more secure." Another agrees: "If you don't assure them it's confidential, they won't be as open."

There are exceptions to the confidentiality rule, however, Ed Lamb reminds them: when a student mentions suicide, child abuse, or threats of any kind. Peer counselors are trained to explain to such students that they are obligated to share this information with an adult. School staff, in turn, decide how to handle each problem and may refer the student to outside professionals.

The Peer Counseling Program is slated to expand, through Project Success, to eight additional schools in the Oakland school system: two high schools and six junior high schools. Lamb has found that the program transfers most easily to a new school when the trainer is a teacher from that school who already has a good rapport with students; using an outside trainer does not work as well.

The program's effects are dramatic among the counselors. "The meetings help us solve our own problems," says one who has not even completed the training. Another adds: "When

there's a problem now -- my own or someone else's -- I ask myself, 'Is this the real problem?' From learning the techniques, it's easier for me to solve my own problems."

"Once you start taking these sessions, you use them in everyday life," agrees the third. "When it comes to making decisions, I already use what I've learned in Peer Counseling. I've started to think differently about the effects of my decisions."

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PEER COUNSELORS

Stonybrook Junior High School
Indianapolis, Indiana

For two years, as part of a schoolwide effort to offer students many kinds of support, selected eighth and ninth graders counseled their peers in this Indianapolis junior high school. "The first year, we had mostly honor roll students," says Debby Hinderliter, program director and the school's guidance supervisor. "The second year, we chose more average kids, and about four of them really blossomed. They developed new attitudes toward school and more self confidence."

Peer counselors were chosen on the basis of teacher recommendations, essays, and interest. Ten hours of training, mostly exercises and role playing, helped them learn to listen, pick up body language clues, and draw out their peers. Ongoing biweekly meetings with Hinderliter, their trainer, gave youngsters time to share experiences, discuss problems, and refine their skills. The hardest thing for them, according to Hinderliter, was learning not to give advice. So they practiced helping "clients" brainstorm and see the consequences of their own solutions.

Tee shirts, PA announcements, buttons, homeroom and PTA meeting visits were among the publicity techniques devised by the first-year counselors to attract clients. By the second year, the program had sold itself, and students were eager to meet with peer counselors.

Sometimes the students were too eager, according to Hinderliter, who met first with each potential client. After talking a bit to determine the nature of their concerns, she matched each with an appropriate peer counselor. Sometimes students didn't really have problems; they were curious, wanted to get out of class, or wanted to meet a particular counselor. Other times problems were too serious for the peer counselors. In either case, Hinderliter let counselors come to their own conclusions, although she kept a careful eye on the more serious problems. "The counselors always let me know when they couldn't handle it," she says. "And they were real good, too, about saying it wasn't a real problem."

Scheduling conflicts eliminated the program in 1988-89, when the "activity period," used for training, meetings, and counseling, was eliminated. "I haven't given up," says Hinderliter, who doesn't want to pull counselors out of regular classes. "The program is just 'on hold' for now."

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PEER COUNSELING

Palo Alto, California

"This program could just as accurately be called Peer Helping," says Dr. Pam Toole, former coordinator of Palo Alto's 18-year-old middle and high school PEER COUNSELING program. The target student for middle school peer counselors, according to Toole, is "the student who goes unnoticed," and the goal is "to help him/her establish some one-to-one relationships."

The program tries to get a cross-section of students as peer counselors, some with leadership potential, some very needy. "It's easy to take the successful kids, but if you don't make it work with minority and high-risk kids, you're missing the mark," is the philosophy of Dr. Mary Bacon, Palo Alto's Director of Special Services. To get the right mix, Toole and her colleagues issue individual invitations -- often to "troublemakers," newcomers, or shy kids -- as well as visiting all seventh and eighth grade classes.

Some 60-100 middle school students participate in after-school training to become peer counselors. They meet in groups of eight to ten, an hour and a half a week, for 15 sessions of activity-based training. The curriculum was developed by Dr. Barbara Varenhorst, Consulting Psychologist (and, with colleague Dr. Beatrix Hamburg, the program's original developer). It covers such topics as questioning, listening, non-verbal communication, confidentiality, and specific adolescent concerns about the family, drugs, sex, and death. After training, students meet weekly for problem-solving and continued training.

Another 25 students enroll in an elective course during the school day. The course, according to Toole, doesn't work as well for training because the group is larger and each session is shorter. In addition, the program has little control over who enrolls in or teaches the course.

All after-school group leaders, mostly teachers but sometimes college volunteers or interns, are themselves carefully trained. "The single most important factor is who runs the groups," asserts Toole. "We need training with heart as well as techniques. Even if people are qualified and have a manual, peer helping is not just a curriculum, it's a way of life."

Staff training is a regular in-service offering in the district, usually scheduled three times a year. It is offered to all adults in the school, whether or not they participate in the program, and to parents as well. "The more people support your program and understand its intent, the more chance [you have] of success," Toole points out. She estimates that a quarter to a third of the middle school staff has been through this training.

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RESOLVING CONFLICT CREATIVELY

New York, New York

It all started with a rubber chicken. During recess at Brooklyn's P.S. 261, two second grade boys were playing with a rubber chicken when one inadvertently backed into a classmate. Some pushing ensued, and suddenly, four more children joined the jostling. Before the situation became a free-for-all, two sixth grade student mediators, with the help of a parent who serves as an advisor during lunch and recess, brought the six children to a quiet area inside the school to pursue mediation. The disputants stared at each other across the narrow hall with expressions of frustration, anger, and hurt. Utilizing creative questions brainstormed that morning at a bi-weekly mediator meeting, the sixth graders asked "What would make you feel happy?", "What do you really want?" These questions provoked hesitant responses, which mediators navigated with minimal help from their advisor. Once the conflict was resolved, the sixth graders congratulated their younger schoolmates on their participation, and asked that they all shake hands. When the disputants returned to recess, the mediators completed mediation reports, describing the number of students involved, their grade levels, and the nature of the conflict and the resolution. Sheila Alson, mediation coordinator for the Resolving Conflict Creatively Program (RCCP), noticed the mediators had some difficulty ending the session and made note to address the issue at the next bi-weekly meeting.

At P.S. 261, every student participates in the Resolving Conflict Creatively Program, while 50 fourth, fifth, and sixth graders serve as trained mediators. These students mediate during lunch and recess on a rotating schedule. Students "on call" may also leave their classrooms to mediate when needed. Although at the program's start faculty members selected the mediators, they are now elected by the student body. This change enables students to select those peers with whom they wish to work. Mediators meet bi-weekly and are supported by a teacher who coordinates the program, a parent who facilitates mediation and scheduling, and a staff developer trained in mediation. Financial constraints prevent many schools from supervising children as they mediate; however there is always a school-based program coordinator and a support person from the RCCP.

Teachers in 14 New York City school districts utilize the RCCP curriculum which focuses on intergroup relations, conflict resolution, appreciation of cultural diversity, and decision making skills. The program has come to include 30,000 students taught by 1,000 teachers in 80 schools ranging from the elementary to the high school level, and encompassing special education and alternative programs. Twelve of these schools include peer mediation in their Resolving Conflict Creatively Program. Participating teachers are introduced to the program's goals and methods in a 20-hour training course which is later augmented with 10 classroom visits by an RCCP consultant. At the twelve peer mediation schools, program coordinators and students are trained in conflict mediation and receive varying levels of follow-up.

The program, a collaborative effort between Educators for Social Responsibility and the New York City public schools, has expanded beyond New York to include 10 schools in Anchorage, Alaska and pilots in Minneapolis, New Orleans and Washington DC. In a program evaluation of the 1988-89 school year, 84% of participating teachers noted positive changes in their classrooms, and over 92% claimed to have altered their own ideas about conflict.

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Partnerships

THE JONES-VILLAGE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

Jones Middle School
First Community Village
Upper Arlington, Ohio

> I don't know exactly how I've changed, but I can feel it inside of me. It's like a brand new doorway has been opened. You could say it has "broadened my horizons," but somehow this doesn't capture the real meaning. The people here are so wonderful, so beautiful, that they have had a deep impact on me.
>
> This program has really made a difference in my life. It is something really different, I mean it's not like getting 100% on a test or having someone tell you that you look nice today. It's a deeper, more important feeling that I've gained. Maybe it has to do with inspiration and knowing what I can make of my life if I just keep trying like these people have.
>
> --Excerpts from student journals

The students quoted above, both 14 year olds, are writing about their experiences in the Jones-Village Partnership Program, a service learning project which pairs eighth graders from Jones Middle School with residents at First Community Village, a nearby retirement village. For six weeks each year since 1979, in the spring, about 30 students have spent two class periods a day at the Village, participating in structured and informal, educational and recreational activities with individual senior citizens.

Both students and seniors get something out of the partnerships. Students work on improving their communication skills and learn about the aging process. Participating seniors make new connections with the young by sharing their knowledge and experiences. In the process, mutual stereotypes are dispelled: of the elderly as feeble and passive, of young adolescents as self-centered and difficult. "Before this, I didn't really know that older people had so much to offer us," comments one youngster. Another adds: "I liked the idea of my partner being busier than I was."

Built into the program are many opportunities for students to reflect on (and learn from) their experiences: individual journals; daily group discussions; taped oral history interviews with seniors; simulations of disabilities common among the elderly; seminars, films, and readings on aging and communication; and more. "This [reflection] took away a lot of my fear of old people," says one student.

Parents are encouraged to participate in the program, too, by visiting the Village with their children and attending the final party held each year. Sometimes a resident "adopts" a student or family, and the relationship continues.

This program is but one of many middle school partnerships sponsored by the school system in Upper Arlington, Ohio, a mostly white, middle- and upper-middle-class community near Columbus. A similar intergenerational program involves Hastings Middle School and Westminster-Thurber Community, another retirement village. Additional partnerships have included: a pen-pal relationship between a learning disabled class and St. Raphael's, a 78-bed nursing home; regular service by an eighth-grade history class at a shelter for the homeless in Columbus; and pairing sixth graders from Hastings with inner-city elementary youngsters for math tutoring.

These partnership programs are only part of Upper Arlington's intertwined system of service learning and school-community relationships, from kindergarten through grade 12, under the sponsorship of career education. Students at all levels have opportunities to learn new skills by helping others, in supervised school or community settings, and to explore their own career goals. "Projects [like the Jones-Village Partnership] make kids think about their world," says Jones Middle School's principal.

"Partnerships make work tangible," points out Ellen Erlanger, Upper Arlington's Director of Career Education, who began the Jones-Village Partnership in 1979 with her eighth-grade American History class. "People talk with students about the skills needed for various jobs and these certainly include the human relations skills learned through the program."

"We need good people in this field," adds the First Community Village director, who welcomes the program. He makes sure students are exposed to jobs involving a variety of helping roles with the 450 Village residents, who live in well-kept independent or semi-independent apartments. Health care is also available at the Village through a clinic and health-care facility.

Many students apply to participate in the Jones-Village Partnership Program each year. Most are selected by lottery, although a few are accepted because of needs identified by their teachers. Students and residents (who also apply) are carefully matched with one another. A student who needs to be drawn out, for example, will be paired with a senior who has that ability. Other pairs are matched by common interests. "No two [students] are alike," observes Nelle Gardner, a 100-year-old retired social worker who has participated in the program since it began. "You could no more prepare for this than fly. There are just as many points of view as there are children."

Program evaluations since 1979, based on several pre- and post-tests and comparisons with control groups, have shown significant changes among student participants in self-concept, communication skills, and attitudes toward aging and the elderly. "I started out unsure of elderly people,/ But as I look now I see beautiful people," wrote one student, inspired by her partner's poem to her. "They're joyous and a pleasure to be with,/ And now each old stereotype is only a myth."

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WAVES: PEOPLE AND CULTURE ON THE LOWER EAST SIDE

ARTS, Inc. (Art Resources for Teachers and Students)
New York City

> We are studying many things about our neighborhood -- Chinatown and the Lower East Side -- because it is an old, interesting and important part of New York. We are trying to learn where the people come from, what jobs they do, what food they eat, and what kinds of celebrations they enjoy. We want to know what people remember about the past and how they live today.
>
> This project is called "Waves: People and Culture on the Lower East Side." Its purpose is to teach children about our community and to make exhibits and publications about its interesting history and people. Children from elementary and parochial schools are doing this project, asking people questions, taking photographs, making drawings and collecting things.
>
> --Student description of project

From 1984 to 1987, 10-to-17-year-old researchers speaking English, Spanish, and several dialects of Chinese fanned out through the Lower East Side of New York City from their storefront base at ARTS, Inc. Using cameras and clipboards, they mapped their neighborhoods, interviewed shopkeepers, drew the interiors of their own apartments, inventoried the produce at local markets, compared Hispanic and Chinese household altars and methods of cooking rice, collected samples of anything interesting and portable, and more.

Sponsor of this folklife research project was ARTS, Inc., a local cultural resource and teaching center founded by two artists in 1970. Five staff members each worked, twice a week after school, with a group including one high school student and five or six younger students. Once a week, the adults and high school students met alone to review, plan, and consult periodically with expert folklorists and anthropologists. Over three years, roughly 250 students were involved on a regular basis, some for a greater length of time than others.

Topics and sites were planned by the project director and group leaders. Within this framework, each group chose its focus. "This framework has to be set very carefully," says Mary Scherbatskoy, director of the project and co-founder of ARTS. "This is college-level social science research."

Three major New York area exhibits of "Waves" were seen by more than 75,000 people. A selection from these exhibits was shown at the Smithsonian Festival of American Folklife in Washington, DC, in 1987.

Funding for the project was provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities, Hazen Foundation, New York State Council for the Arts, Consolidated Edison, National Endowment for the Arts, and private donors. Exhibition funding was provided by the New York Council for the Humanities and the Institute of Museum Services.

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MAGIC ME
Baltimore, Maryland

Magic Me, run by a non-profit organization of the same name, pairs 11 to 14 year olds with residents of nursing homes in what it calls "imaginative community service." The young people spend an hour a week, during the school day, with their partners, writing poetry, playing basketball, dancing to disco music. If needed, they adapt these activities for chair-bound elderly: making basketball hoops with their arms, dancing by waving their arms. Sometimes they take trips to the theater or ballpark or host parties. The point, according to founder Kathy Levin, is to "get beyond the wrinkles and tears," making friends and recognizing their common humanity.

During 1989-1990, more than 640 youngsters from 12 Baltimore area schools, nine public and three private. Although these young people came from a variety of backgrounds, the program takes particular interest in those who have been identified as potential dropouts or behavior problems.

Five full-time Magic Me staff members provide about four hours of training and supervise all visits to the nursing homes. They also meet monthly with the students at their schools to discuss any problems, address issues such as aging and dying, and work on communication skills.

Magic Me's annual budget, provided by two community foundations, is roughly $250 per student. This covers staff salaries, transportation, student tee shirts, and supplies.

Founded in Baltimore in 1981, Magic Me programs now operate in California, Florida, Iowa, Kansas, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, and Tennessee as well as Great Britain and France.

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Multiple Service Programs

THE EARLY ADOLESCENT HELPER PROGRAM

New York City

Being a Helper means...

...Knowing how to give to other people.
...Being able to help others understand things I've already learned.
...Learning how to deal with older people and how to understand their lifestyles, hopes, dreams and values.
...Helping kids with their problems and their homework.
...To be responsible, to understand, and to help out.

--Statements by Helpers at the 1988 and 1990 Helper Conventions

More than 300 junior high and middle school Helpers from 15 public schools in New York City are participants in the Early Adolescent Helper Program. Many more students from Bridgeport, Louisville, Milwaukee, and additional cities across the country are also part of the network of Helper Programs. Now in its ninth year of operation, the Helper Program has branched out from a modest office at the Center for Advanced Study in Education at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York (CUNY). The action arm of the National Center for Service Learning in Early Adolescence, this office provides materials, training, technical assistance, help with evaluation, conferences, yearly Helper conventions, and plain old-fashioned advice and hand-holding to schools and agencies in the network.

Three forms of the Helper Program exist: the Child Care Helper Program, the After-School Helper Program, and the Partners Program. In the Child Care and After-School programs, Helpers work with pre-school and school-age children and have multiple roles including reading aloud, supervising the playground or helping with building and math games. "Partners" is an inter-generational program; at senior centers and nursing homes Helpers work with older adults on a variety of projects ranging from recording oral histories to staging dramatic performances. (Examples of each, specific schools and placement sites are provided later in this case study.)

Despite the varied services and settings, several elements are the same in all Helper Programs. Helpers receive extensive training, based on training guides developed by the Helper Program staff and consultants; "activity" or "discovery" learning is the watchword of these curricula. Simulation exercises, role playing, open-ended discussions, writing in journals are some of the activities through which the young Helpers explore the responsibilities of their new roles and the special characteristics of the population with whom they will work. The weekly group meetings or seminars continue after Helpers begin their service; ongoing training and reflection enable them to solve problems and process their experiences.

At each school, a staff member -- usually a teacher but sometimes a counselor or administrator -- takes responsibility for coordinating the program. He or she runs the training and reflection sessions, locates placement sites, arranges scheduling and transportation if needed, finds an on-site supervisor, coordinates with on-site staff, and generally acts as point-person and trouble-shooter. The Helper Program office, through its staff and cadre of Field Associates, offers onging support and assistance.

Each school manages program details in the way that suits its individual needs and constraints. In some schools, for example, Helpers meet for training and reflection during their lunch periods. At an increasing number of schools, however, the seminar is a regularly scheduled class. This can take the form of a "community service class" or can be part of a standard class such as language arts or social studies. The Helper Program is cross-disciplinary in that many of the activities the students engage in can be directly related to different subject areas. The costs to each school of running the Helper Program are negligible.

Sometimes Helpers work after school at their placement sites; at other schools, service takes place during the school day. Their hours vary, too, generally ranging from one to four hours per week at the site. In some schools, the teacher acting as program leader is compensated or is relieved of other work. Often he or she is a volunteer, adding these responsibilities to an already full schedule.

Recruitment and selection of Helpers also vary from school to school. Some are chosen in order to motivate them to stay in school, others as recognition for superior performance. Some Helpers volunteer, while others are required to participate. The result across schools is a broad range of academic, socioeconomic, and ethnic backgrounds. Although Helper Programs usually have a full enrollment, most sites note that recruiting males is often difficult.

The Helper Program grew out of an earlier pilot project initiated by the National Commission on Resources for Youth (NCRY) in 1982. In 1983, when NCRY was dissolved, the program moved to CUNY's Center for Advanced Study in Education. With support from a number of private foundations, the program has expanded gradually each year since then, following director Joan Schine's philosophy that "You start small and do something really well before you try to grow." The program is now part of the National Center for Service Learning in Early Adolescence, a national resource for teachers, administrators, policymakers and others interested in service programs for young adolescents.

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CHILD CARE HELPERS
Louis Armstrong Middle School
Queens, New York

At Louis Armstrong Middle School in the East Elmhurst section of Queens, students are involved in a variety of service activities; service learning is regarded by principal and staff as integral to the middle school experience. Two classes work with young children; one class visits a local day care center, and another class is paired with a nearby elementary school first grade class.

Teacher Ivy Diton accompanies her students to the day care site where they help out reading to younger children, playing educational games, and acting a teacher assistants. This Helper Program, part of the curriculum at Louis Armstrong, helps fulfill part of a requirement for seventh graders. According to Ms. Diton, the key to a successful program is the preparation of the students. Before students started going to the day care center, they spent time in class discussing parenting, child rearing, and the value of positive reinforcement. They also role played to anticipate problems they might encounter at their site. When they got to the day care center, they were prepared, and the program has been an overwhelming success.

Ms. Diton reports that Helpers become more mature, responsible and self-assured as a result of their service. They have also experienced first-hand the difficulties and rewards of working with younger children, and can see the importance of education since they have been educating others.

Ms. Diton says she and other teachers have noticed changes in certain students since they have been Helpers. One student, known as a troublemaker and fighter in school was suddenly faced with stopping younger children from fighting at the day care center. He had to explain to them why fighting was not a useful way to solve conflict. Through this experience, he saw the futility in his old reactions, and his perceptions of discipline and fighting changed.

In another Louis Armstrong program, "special education" students from Peggy Gass' sixth grade class meet with first graders from a local elementary school on a regular basis. The sixth graders read aloud to their younger counterparts. The Helpers practice reading aloud in their seminars. Ms. Gass gets help from the guide, Reading, Writing and Reviewing: Helpers Promoting Reading. The guide outlines seminars for teaching adolescents how to choose, critique and read aloud children's books. Ms. Gass sees many benefits from the program. According to Ms. Gass, previously "reluctant readers" are building new relationships, developing an increased sense of competence, and discovering their own leadership qualities. The program is a valuable link to the community as well.

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AFTER SCHOOL HELPERS
I.S. 174
Bronx, NY

Every Monday and Wednesday after school more than twenty-five 13 and 14 year old Helpers walk down the block from Intermediate School 174 (the Eugene T. Maleska Intermediate School) in District 8 in the Bronx to the Kips Bay Boys and Girls Club. The Club is a well-equipped facility with everything from pool tables to a computer room, to an arts and crafts center and an indoor basketball court. Helpers meet in the television room, sign in and move into their assignments. Several are assigned to tutor younger children individually. Two Helpers hang whistles around their necks to referee a basketball game. Another student makes her way to the arts and crafts room where she will work with children on special projects. Two others don bathing suits to supervise children swimming in the pool. Other Helpers begin reading aloud to young children while their friends go outside to supervise playground activities.

That these Helpers give up two afternoons a week to volunteer at Kips Bay testifies to their commitment to the work they are doing there. What makes this scene even more remarkable is that these student Helpers have been targeted by I.S. 174's Attendance Improvement Drop-out Prevention Program.

Many parents and their children depend on the Kips Bay Boys and Girls Club for after-school programming. The students from I.S. 174 who participate in the Helper Program play an important role in the Club's success in providing meaningful activities for these young children. Parents of <u>both</u> groups are encouraged by the changes they see in their children: Helpers are becoming more confident in their own abilities to perform useful work while improving their school attendance, and their young charges are receiving extra help, while at the same time developing close relationships with their older "mentors."

Program Leader Milt Waltzer has supervised a Helper Program at I.S. 174 for the past two years. Waltzer always has many students interested in volunteering; he believes that they volunteer because they get a feeling of satisfaction from helping younger children. Waltzer, a guidance counselor for twenty-two years, eighteen of them at I.S. 174 says, "In all my years in education I have never done anything more important or significant for children than to get them involved in the Helper Program."

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"PARTNERS"
THE INTERGENERATIONAL HELPER PROGRAM
St. Elizabeth School
New York, NY

New friendships, a community mural, oak tag signs protesting budget cuts, a new partner for dominoes; these are all products of the St. Elizabeth/STAR Senior Center Partners Program. Since October, seventh graders from the St. Elizabeth School in the Washington Heights section of Manhattan have been going to the STAR Senior Center. All seventh graders at St. Elizabeth participate in service. Some are at a local day care center, others tutor within the school. The group that goes to STAR has had a great experience. Helpers and elders designed and painted a mural of their community, made gifts for the homebound elderly, played games, and had a dance party. The two groups also recently collaborated on making signs for a demonstration in Washington protesting budget cuts for senior centers. Students came up with slogans and seniors made large oak tag signs that they carried at the protest. Although students were not paired with specific seniors, special friendships sprung up. One student reported that his best experience was "the day I got my senior."

According to Program Leader Sister Carmen Torres, the program broke down stereotypes for the students as they met and became friends with older adults. In classroom seminars, students voiced their apprehensions about meeting the seniors. Once they started going to STAR, they spent time in class discussing problems they had in their service roles, and brainstormed ways to remedy them.

STAR has also benefitted directly from the program. The Director of STAR, Ruth Rossini, believes the Partners Program lends dignity to everyone involved. She states that working with adolescents is a positive experience for seniors because it relieves their loneliness and diminishes their fear of young people. Elders without grandchildren nearby often form surrogate relationships with the Helpers, and those who are frightened of the youth discover that teenagers from their community are friendly and helpful, not threatening.

The program at St. Elizabeth was such a success this year that plans are underway to involved eighth graders next year. This new policy grew out of a suggestion by students: they said their time with the seniors was too short, and they wanted to continue going to STAR the following year.

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HELPER EVALUATORS

Eleven Helpers from four New York City schools in the Helper network became student evaluators in the spring of 1988. Chosen by their program leaders, these sixth, seventh, and eighth graders worked closely with Dr. Patricia Campbell, the Helper Program's evaluation consultant. The process has been successfully repeated in subsequent years, and staff members are hopeful that it will be adapted in a number of additional school-based programs.

The goal of the "Helpers as Evaluators Project" is to collect information about the program from the perspectives of the Helpers and their "clients." In the process, the Evaluators become familiar with and practice research techniques, and learn about the interpretation and responsible use of data.

In the Helper Program's model, Helpers learn what evaluation is and discuss aspects of the Helper Program they might want to find out about. They then design interviews and questionnaires to use with other Helpers, with staff at their placement sites (day care centers, after-school programs, and senior citizen centers), and with children and seniors at these sites.

After several weeks of data collection, Helper-Evaluators meet to discuss the results of their interviews and to generate a series of conclusions and recommendations about the Helper Program. Staff of the Helper Program, or the Program Leader at each site, write a report, circulate it to involved Helpers and revise it based on their comments. The Helper-Evalutators' recommendations become part of the Helper Program's ongoing program review and improvement.

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COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM

Shoreham-Wading River Middle School
Shoreham, New York

> [Students at Shoreham-Wading River Middle School] learn to care for others, outgrow pity and appreciate the insights of the infirm or the handicapped, tap the experiences of people different from themselves, and perform essential duties for which they are held accountable. People truly depend on them. The students perform real work and, as their journals indicate, conclude that they are valuable.
>
> --Joan Lipsitz, Successful Schools for Young Adolescents

Shoreham-Wading River Middle School's extraordinary schoolwide Community Service Program has been a pioneer among middle schools in the nation. From modest beginnings in one class in 1973, community service has grown to become an integral part of the education of every one of the school's approximately 500 sixth through eighth graders.

An important goal of the program is to enable these students, nearly all white, from working or middle-class families, to make connections with people different from themselves. Students work with young children, children with handicaps, and the elderly, providing needed and valued service as well as forming new relationships. "Until it actually occurs, no one can picture it [community service by young adolescents]," says Joanne Urgese, program coordinator. "Then after six or eight site visits, they greet the group with a big smile."

Most community service projects are part of eight to ten week units of study by one class or a team of two classes. Many students and teachers, in addition, participate in shorter-term projects such as hosting preschool children at the school and its adjoining farm, teaching adults computer basics at the school's computer lab, and working on environmental issues.

In all projects, students learn both caring skills and responsibility, taking on roles usually reserved for older teens or adults. "It just makes me feel older than I really am to take over responsibilities," says one former participant. "This is the very first time I have been able to prove what I can do."

Much classroom work accompanies the ongoing projects. With their regular teacher, students learn about the population with whom they will work, receive training and orientation for the roles they will play, plan and assess sessions at the field sites. Sometimes the whole class works at the same site; sometimes they are placed at a number of sites. Individual journals and other writing as well as group discussions after each site visit help students reflect on their experiences.

Classes participate by choice of their teachers, who also select the service placements. "If anything, it adds to my curriculum," says one sixth-grade teacher. "Experiential learning for children at this age is paramount. A lot of what we do here [in school] does happen out in the community. They're doing reading, math in their jobs."

The program has developed an extensive resource list of films, presentations, and readings for classroom use. "Exploring Childhood," for example, materials from the Educational Development Center, helps prepare students to work with young children. "Main Street," a curriculum from the New York State Council on the Arts, prepares youngsters for working with special needs populations.

Once a week, accompanied by their teachers, students work for about an hour at their placement sites, which include local day care centers, nursery schools, the public library, elementary schools, a school and hospital for the handicapped, special education schools, adult homes, health care facilities, and nursing homes. "When you got there," says one former participant, "there was this feeling -- they were really glad to see you!"

At the sites, these young volunteers teach lessons, lead arts and crafts activities, read stories, and conduct other planned activities. "We want our students to run things when they get there," says Urgese. "We've backed off when they [agency staff] just hand them something to do -- just have them help with whatever's happening anyway. We want our kids to plan."

In the beginning, according to Winifred Pardo, the original director and developer of the program and now the school's administrative assistant, it was not so easy to find placements for the young volunteers. Now "they know we'll do what we say we're going to do," says Pardo with a smile. She points out that the program guarantees each participating agency a certain number of visits at a definite time each week and that this "contract" is always met. Urgese adds: "We know our sites so well now that we know what they need from us."

Crucial to the program's success is its staff: a full-time coordinator and four teacher assistants. Working closely with teachers, they handle such necessary but time-consuming tasks as locating agencies for placements, making arrangements with agency staff, scheduling transportation on the school district's mini-vans, finding appropriate classroom materials, and so forth. They also maintain regular communication with agency staff during each project. In addition, they participate in all site visits and usually work with small groups of students. This allows the classroom teacher to focus on preparing students for the on-site work and ensures that each project goes smoothly and is useful to both the students and agencies involved.

Watching middle school students reading to three- and four-year-olds at the local library -- or making pottery with students with severe disabilities -- or singing with a group of elderly men and women -- one is struck by how seriously they take their responsibilities and how warm

and responsive they are to their "clients." Their services are needed and valued, and excerpts from their journals show that students recognize this.

> I'll be the first to admit that this has been a big learning experience. I think I have just had a small glimpse of what teaching is all about ... I feel this whole thing had a bigger impact on my life than theirs.
>
> I am glad kids can see for themselves that the stereotype of "grouchy" elders is not true. As far as making a difference, the difference happened in both of us ... They carried our letters with them as if they were gold, they clapped as we arrived, and how enthusiastic they were when we started a new project ... As long as we know what we did for them, that is all I care about. I hope future students can share this feeling with us.
>
> I can remember when I was younger if I saw a retarded person I was afraid of them, but now they have become people with wants and needs to me.

"Believe in the kids!" is Pardo's advice to other schools interested in starting a community service program like this. *"Kids this age can do this kind of community service,"* she adds, countering the misconception of young adolescents she and others have met over the years and that Shoreham's program has long laid to rest in its community.

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HUGSS PROGRAM (HELPING US GROW THROUGH SERVICE AND SMILES)

Challenger Middle School
Colorado Springs, Colorado

All 850 sixth through eighth graders at Challenger Middle School participate in community service activities through the HUGSS Program. Each of the school's nine academic "teams" (three per grade) adopts at least one community service agency or project for the year. This collaborative effort helped to unite Challenger's teams in the recent transition from junior high to middle school.

Some middle school students adopt grandparents from the Silver Key Association. Others visit nursing homes, bringing puppies from the Humane Society to bridge the generation gap. Still others act as "big buddies" to preschoolers in a local Head Start program or a school for the blind. Some focus their efforts on the hungry or the sick, working with a food pantry or hospice. And in 1987 some looked further afield, adopting a school in Malawi, Africa.

Initially, Elaine Andrus, former coordinator of the program, located community agencies. Now, in addition, students are suggesting projects and roles for themselves. From the beginning, she says, agencies welcomed the idea; now, they ask for HUGSS.

HUGSS is an integral element of the school's explicit educational mission, which emphasizes social and emotional as well as academic growth. Today's adolescents are "disconnected," says principal Donald Joiner; family structures are weakened, many students are unsupervised after school, and TV exerts a powerful influence. "Education needs to build back connections," he says, "to create an extended family concept [in school]." Challenger does this by dividing each grade into three teams, each working with a core group of academic teachers, a counselor, and an administrator.

"What we need to teach," adds Joiner, "is, one, how to be active learners, and, two, how to survive in a world we don't know and can't predict." He also feels the school must teach the social and caring skills not taught elsewhere, so that students understand the responsibilities as well as the privileges of citizenship in a democratic society.

Andrus finds parents very supportive in this largely white, middle-class community. Some have even become volunteers in their children's service projects.

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YOUTH VOLUNTEERS

New York State 4-H Clubs and
Cornell Cooperative Extension
Cornell University
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Youth Volunteers, designed for 13 to 16 year olds, places youngsters in one of three types of community service: 1) in school-age child care or other after-school programs; 2) as assistant leaders in 4-H Clubs and other youth groups; and 3) in community improvement projects. Services provided by these young volunteers range from monitoring the environment to helping the elderly, from registering voters to starting a community newspaper.

Key program features include providing the young volunteers with training so that they are prepared to assume new roles and also giving them ongoing opportunities to reflect on their work. Other factors are critical for success, according to program developers: consistent and involved adult advisors for each project; youth- and community-centered purposes; and a limited time commitment (projects typically don't exceed three months).

More than 100 young volunteers, some drawn from 4-H membership, others from local schools or community groups, participated in the pilot project of Youth Volunteers, completed in early 1987. Training manuals and materials and evaluation reports were produced by the Department of Human Development and Family Studies at Cornell University. Among the participating New York State counties were Chenango, Monroe, Niagara, Onondaga, Orange, Oswego, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Steuben, and Tompkins. Funding for program development was provided by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation.

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YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Pyne Poynt Middle School
Camden, New Jersey

The Youth Leadership Program at Pyne Poynt was a victim of budget cuts, and no longer operates. We have chosen to include the initial 1989 case study because it can still serve as a model for others seeking ways to serve "problem" populations.

> This program gives us a chance to make a change in our city -- stop drugs, clean up the city.
>
> This program might help to do things for people outside on the street.
>
> --Comments by student participants

Pyne Poynt Middle School, in Camden, New Jersey, sits isolated by long stretches of grass from the shabby wooden row houses of the neighborhood. Broken windows, loose boards, rubble-strewn yards stand in mute contrast to the relatively well-kept brick school building. But the streets intrude: as sixth- through eighth-grade students arrive and leave every day, drug dealers are doing a lively business on the closest corners.

In the school auditorium early one afternoon at the end of November, 1988, a group of students plan an after-school tutoring program for elementary schoolchildren. They decide to call it the "After-School Achievement Program." Under the supervision of the Camden Youth Commission, it will be held after school in a local church four days a week.

Nine students volunteer to be tutors. "Parents don't have time, because they work, to give care and attention to kids," says one of the young volunteers, explaining why this program is needed.

"They'll do better in school," contributes another, helping to define the program's goals. A third youngster adds: "They'll know someone is out there who cares."

Camden, New Jersey, where these students live, is not an easy place in which to grow up. According to the United States Conference of Mayors, it has the highest rate of child poverty in the country: an estimated 61.9 percent of its children lived in poverty in 1986, and the families of nearly two out of three children receive some kind of public assistance. Violence, often drug-related, is a fact of daily life. (New York Times, 12/29/88)

Against this bleak backdrop, a new community service program was developed to help some of Pyne Poynt's more troubled young adolescents find new resources within themselves: the Youth Leadership Program, run by Leadership, Inc., a community leadership development agency in nearby Philadelphia. Staff from the school and the Camden Youth Commission work closely with project staff to identify, supervise, and counsel students. A teacher-coordinator and youth worker are assigned to the group. The school principal is quietly supportive, invariably greeting students personally as they arrive at group meetings.

Through community service projects designed and run by the students themselves -- like the after-school tutoring -- the program seeks to help them develop their leadership and communication skills and increase their self-esteem as well as motivate them to stay in school. During 1987-88, the program was piloted in one high school; with funding from the Pew Charitable Foundation and local corporations, it now operates in three high schools and two junior high schools.

Twenty-five Pyne Poynt Middle School students -- those meeting in the auditorium -- participate in the program: a mix of half Black and half Hispanic, half male and half female sixth through eighth graders. They have been selected because of their leadership potential and because they are among the school's "problem" students (those with records of discipline problems, poor attendance, drug use, or failing grades). According to Arthur Schwartz, the program's director and resident visionary, many of these students have been exposed firsthand to the drugs, alcohol, and violence of Camden's streets.

Unlikely leaders, these. What do they think being a leader means? Responses on a student survey are mixed:

> It means when you grow up it will make you a better person and have confidence in yourself.
>
> Be the boss.
>
> To get to know other people and have fun.
>
> I could show young children what is wrong or right. And I could teach them to do what's right.
>
> It means that I am really improving myself. Kids are looking up to me.

Their first activity in the program was a two-day retreat in early November, 1988. In an outdoor setting removed literally and symbolically from their daily lives, they explored personal and program goals and activities and participated in a variety of team-building activities. "Not everybody works well together," points out one student. "It's hard to learn to work together in two days."

The students meet for an hour twice a week in the school's auditorium or library, whichever is available, for discussions, simulations, role playing, and other activities in the program's leadership training and civic involvement curriculum. They also plan and reflect on their community service projects during these group meetings. In addition to tutoring, some are planning school improvement projects, such as cleaning up bathrooms and the lunchroom. A "Local Heroes" project is planned, in which students will research, write, edit, and publish a book about community people who are "making a difference." Eventually, community mentors will be identified to work closely with students on their projects. Students keep individual journals about their experiences. An award banquet is planned for the end of the year with the Camden mayor as keynote speaker. A professional evaluation will look at program implementation and its impact on students, teachers, and the community.

It's impossible to tell whether these young people's high hopes -- and those of the adults involved with the program -- will be even partially realized. Already one student who was at the retreat is in jail. Several students fail to return to class after group meetings on any given day. These young people are wary, cynical beyond their years, not easy to reach or help. Caring and commitment are clearly present among all the adults involved, however. If they can help some of these troubled but promising young adolescents direct their apparent energy into positive activities and achieve even small successes, the program will give a bit of hope to a community, school, and group of youth all too accustomed to failure and hopelessness.

As noted, due to funding cuts, the Youth Leadership Program is no longer operating. However, since it is an effective model of a service learning program for early adolescents, it is described here.

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS OF CASE STUDIES

The programs described in Chapter 3 are intended to be seen as models: exemplary, but not perfect. While they differ in such important features as population, services, structure, and size, nonetheless they have much in common. From Phoenix to Minneapolis to New York City, program leaders share goals, approaches, and, too often, obstacles as they work with 10 to 15 year olds in service learning projects.

It is clear that most of the young adolescents involved in these programs derive benefits from their experiences. Those benefits do not come automatically, however. The kinds of service the youngsters provide, the way they are prepared for their roles, the kinds of tasks or responsibilities they assume, and their opportunities for reflecting on their work are among the factors determining the power of the experience.

Appropriate Roles for Early Adolescents

Interpersonal Relationships

This survey bears out what most of those who have worked with young adolescents in community service, and observers of these programs, agree upon: the most meaningful roles for this age group are those involving interpersonal relationships. In virtually all of the service learning projects described in the case studies, young adolescents work with people, taking on concrete "helping" roles: tutoring younger or handicapped students, counseling their peers, mediating disputes, helping senior citizens, assisting teachers in day care centers.

Working with the very young or the aging, the young volunteers enjoy the warm welcome and affection that greet them, and at the same time their self-esteem is bolstered by the knowledge that their help is valued. Comments at the end of their projects underscore this: "I will miss the children that came up to me and jumped on me because they were happy to see me," said one young Helper from the Early Adolescent Helper Program after serving as an aide in a day care center. "Today was pretty sad," wrote a youngster from Shoreham-Wading River Middle School in her journal at the end of her visits to a nursing home. "I found myself purposely not talking to the residents so as not to be 'into it.' I was afraid to put my all in only to know it was the last visit."

A natural affinity appears to exist between young teenagers and preschool children. "I think I learned a lot about little kids and maybe even more about myself," wrote a student from Shoreham-Wading River Middle School. "From little kids I learned that they can be a lot more difficult than I thought. Each one has a different need or a different quality ... I also learned a lot about myself that I didn't know before ... I got more compassionate and understanding with the kids as the weeks went on."

Research in two sites of the Helper Program has revealed something of the nature of this relationship. Classrooms of four year olds, with and without young Helpers, were observed and videotaped over a two-year period. It was found that:

> Helpers and children develop a relationship with each other that is different from that which is developed between children and teachers. Helpers and children spend more time together in one-to-one relationships, interact more and ask for and receive more help ... In these relationships, the Helper would at times act as an adult supervising the child, but at other times act as a child, playing with a "special" friend. (Schine and Campbell, 2-3)

When young adolescents work with the elderly or disabled, they call upon different skills and learn about very different aspects of human development. But their response -- new understanding of those different from themselves and of the continuum of human life -- and their satisfaction are similar.

Concrete Value

Although programs emphasizing interpersonal relationships are especially appropriate for the early adolescent, there is value as well in those where the impact on others is somewhat less direct. Learning and personal growth will result if youngsters believe their service has real value to those served. "The value of this whole experience for me is making them happy and changing their lives a bit," wrote a Shoreham volunteer. "I didn't have any regrets except I feel like a bad person because it's over. I know it sounds weird, but I feel like I stopped by for nothing, just to see those people happy for 10 weeks ... All in all I enjoyed the whole experience and I think I made a difference."

Another essential aspect of young adolescents' roles in service programs is that they have tangible, visible outcomes. In community improvement projects in the 4-H Youth Volunteer Program in New York State, for example, streams were made cleaner or newspapers were printed or voters were registered. The folklife research project sponsored by ARTS, Inc., in New York City resulted in three exhibitions; before that, students had photographs, drawings, interview transcriptions, and reports to show for their work.

Flexibility and Limits

The Connections project team had assumed that "one-shot" efforts at community service, in general, offered only limited opportunities for youngsters to learn skills or broaden their horizons. This assumption was confirmed by observations and interviews with staff in several programs. Activities such as fund-raising for a particular cause or holiday visits to nursing homes and hospitals do fill some needs, but, it was found, they lack both continuity and meaningful learning components.

Many programs do offer some flexibility, however, recognizing that young adolescents' needs and interests can vary. Several allow for varying levels of commitment: youngsters can get involved in ongoing or shorter-term projects, as at Shoreham or in ARTS' folklife research project. Other programs adapt to this age group by making all projects short-term or structuring them with a series of clear stages. The partnerships in Arlington, Ohio, for example, last six weeks. In the Helper Program, students move through defined stages of training, observation, then actually working at their placement sites.

Allowing the young volunteers to have some authority and decision-making power in their service roles is critical. All of these programs, however, set clear parameters for students. Young adolescents are not developmentally ready, for the most part, to take on a project from conception to realization. "What do you want to do?" is a question most are not yet equipped to answer. The adult leaders in the programs cited choose service roles, find placement sites, and help the youngsters set goals. Setting limits, however, should be viewed as a way to enhance the likelihood of a project's success. The challenge to the adult leader lies in providing genuine opportunities for decision-making and problem solving within the "fail-safe" mechanism of established guidelines. Students can, for example, explore the needs of the immediate neighborhood, decide together which problems people of their age can address, and with the guidance of their adult leader, develop an action plan. Such projects can range from negotiating with city hall to clean up a neighborhood to working collaboratively with senior citizens to defuse neighborhood tensions between generations.

Common Elements

The Adult Leader

"The single most important factor is who runs the groups," says Pam Toole, who runs the Palo Alto Peer Counseling Program, echoing colleagues throughout the country involved in service learning programs for early adolescents. A consistent, well-trained, and sensitive adult leader is probably the most important element in every one of the programs cited here. This leader must be skilled at training, at helping youngsters articulate their successes and failures, at helping them find the personal meaning of their experiences. In addition, he or she must enjoy working with young adolescents, be convinced of their ability to contribute, and be committed to their growth.

This is not easy. Junior high and middle school youngsters are difficult, contrary, inconsistent. But, says Scherbatskoy, "Most people do things that are too easy for kids. And kids are very smart. They know when what you're doing isn't important." And, conversely, when what they're doing is important, they show unexpected responsibility and stability. Program leaders testify that the personal rewards of working in effective programs for these youngsters are immeasurable.

The Learning Component

The importance of providing adequate time and skilled leadership for training and reflective activities cannot be overemphasized. Young adolescents require careful training before they can assume new roles and work with people different from themselves. In the programs highlighted here, training time varies widely, but most staff members agree that between ten and twenty hours is the minimum needed.

The nature of this training is as critical as its duration. Those who work with young adolescents stress their need to move around, to get involved in activities. These programs have developed training curricula using discovery learning: role playing, simulation exercises, and the like, which allow youngsters to practice their new roles and make concrete their fears and expectations.

The training must also be specific to the roles the young adolescents will play and the population with whom they will work. If they are working with the elderly, for example, there should be some advance discussion about death and dying as well as aging. If they are working with the disabled, they need information about the specific disabilities they will encounter and the limitations these impose on activities they might plan.

Reflection, which allows the young service providers to make sense of their experiences and make explicit their own growth, is also activity-based in these programs. In activities much like those in the training curricula, youngsters act out and discuss their successes and difficulties, write in their journals, practice new skills, receive more training as needed, and get feedback on their progress. According to practitioners, weekly or, at the very least, biweekly meetings are ideal. Some programs, for a variety of reasons (discussed in the section on "Obstacles" later in this report), are unable to meet this schedule.

A related, important element is supervision at the placement site. Young adolescents frequently need guidance or encouragement, especially when they first take on new responsibilities. Whether it is by their teachers or by the agency staff at the site, consistent and sensitive supervision is necessary.

Even when receiving staff at the placement site are not responsible for supervision, they need to be prepared not just to accept the youngsters, but to help them understand and reach out to the people with whom they will work. These young adolescents are inexperienced and vulnerable. They need the assurance of staff members who are aware of them, can offer constructive criticism and positive reinforcement, and are genuinely pleased to have them at the agency. When this does not happen, youngsters notice and are discouraged, as one Shoreham volunteer pointed out in his journal:

> There was one incident on 2/23 when we came into the class and the teacher said, "Oh, you're here again." That really ticked me off. I was ready to just walk out

and not go again. This was a disappointment. If someone was coming into my classroom, I would greet them with a big hello and make them feel welcome.

Taken as a whole, training, supervision, and reflection comprise the learning component of each of these community service programs. *Without them, service activities would exist in a void -- not related to youngsters' experiences in or outside of school.*

Although current data on program outcomes are inadequate, they do indicate that the programs' impacts on young people have been very positive. Program administrators and participants are convinced of this, and the project team's observations support these convictions. The programs' learning components, varied as they are, are clearly responsible for solidifying these impacts.

Student Selection

The way that students are selected or recruited for these programs seems to reflect the assumptions and goals of program developers. Some programs choose to target particular groups of students, either because of their needs (e.g., the Pyne Poynt Youth Leadership Program for "at-risk" youth) or their talents (other programs only enroll the "stars"). Most of the programs featured here, like New York City's Resolving Conflict Creatively Program, aim for a cross-section of students representing the school or community's entire population. The models presented in this report demonstrate that all kinds of youngsters can participate enthusiastically and can contribute productively in community service.

Recognition

Receiving public recognition for their volunteer work is very important to this age group and seems to reinforce their newly won self-confidence and awareness of their own growth. All the programs described here provide that recognition in some way, from special tee-shirts, like those worn by Magic Me participants and by the mediators in the Resolving Conflict Creatively Program, to celebrations, sometimes involving parents, like those given by Friendly PEERsuasion and the Jones-Village Partnership Program. The key to this recognition, according to program leaders, is the collective acknowledgment of accomplishment, the conviction that, "I did this!" Young adolescents, so often filled with self-doubt, sometimes need this recognition in order to believe in their own accomplishments.

Common Obstacles

With few exceptions, practitioners who initiate community service programs involving early adolescents, no matter how convincing the evidence or how committed the staff, will face obstacles. While this survey is encouraging in many ways, and the number of service learning programs around the country is increasing, there are still few places where community service is integrated into school or youth programs. To some extent, this is undoubtedly due to lack of

awareness of the benefits of service learning programs for this age group. But programs face many other obstacles, regardless of their differing communities or student populations.

Institutionalization

The single biggest obstacle faced by almost all the models featured here is the uncertainty of their continued existence. Seldom have the school-based programs become an institutionalized part of the school. There are, of course, exceptions: among them, Palo Alto's Peer Counseling Program, the Shoreham-Wading River Middle School's Community Service Program, Colorado Springs' HUGSS Program, and a number of Helper Programs including those at Louis Armstrong Middle School and the St. Elizabeth School.

Almost all the other school-based programs are "add-on" or "pull-out:" they happen after school or pull youngsters out of their regular classes for program activities. This is certainly not ideal for the youngsters involved or for the program's stability. Debby Hinderliter, in Indianapolis, put her Peer Counselors Program "on hold" rather than turn it into a pull-out program. The Resolving Conflict Creatively Program, in New York City, represents a sort of middle ground: while the mediation component is a pull-out program, the basic peace education curriculum is integrated into regular classroom work, making the pull-out portion of the program less vulnerable to being cut.

In community agency programs, such as the Girls Inc.'s Friendly PEERsuasion Program or Leadership, Inc.'s Youth Leadership Program, continued existence depends upon funding, which is always precarious.

Where community service is recognized as an integral component of the school or agency program, staff members can devote their energies to program development and improvement rather than to its survival.

Logistics

The logistical difficulties experienced by these programs are as varied as the programs themselves and range from finding placement sites to recruiting adult leaders, from buying refreshments to scheduling special events. Two difficulties are fairly common across programs, however: scheduling and transportation. In programs like Shoreham's, where designated staff spends most or all of its time on the program, solutions are easier to work out than in those where already overburdened school administrators or faculty must deal with these logistics.

Many of the school-based models experience scheduling difficulties primarily because they are not integrated into their schools' curricula. Project Humanity in Minneapolis, Minnesota, is a case in point: the adult leader, himself a special education teacher with a full schedule, is able to meet with the peer tutors as a group for reflective activities only two or three times a year. In some programs, students and their adult leader meet during lunch, as they often do in the Helper Program; sometimes they meet after school; sometimes they are pulled

out of regular classes, with the burden of making up any missed work on their own. Seldom are any concessions made for students who participate in community service. And this makes participating most difficult for the very students who may benefit the most: those who are struggling with academic work.

Even in schools where the training and reflection are scheduled during the school day, scheduling is difficult. Few middle or junior high schools use modular scheduling or other devices that permit double class periods or other flexible arrangements. (A notable exception, again, is the program in Shoreham.) Thus, it is nearly impossible for most programs to juxtapose the learning component and the work placement to complement each other.

Another common difficulty is transportation to the placement site. Rare indeed is the school district, like Shoreham's, that is willing and able to provide transportation. More often, buses must be hired (at great expense), parents lined up, or other, sometimes complicated, arrangements worked out. Usually, these must meet strict district and insurance guidelines. Some programs have avoided these difficulties by providing service right in their own schools, as the peer counseling and peer tutoring programs do, or at sites within walking distance, as some Helper Programs do.

Educational Reform Mandates

Some of the most pervasive and difficult obstacles to overcome appear under the banner of reform. About 35 states have introduced initiatives that either add hours to the school day, increase course requirements for the high school diploma, require remedial classes in reading and computing, or place greater emphasis on standardized test scores. New York State illustrates this problem: the Regents Action Plan, developed at least partially in response to A Nation At Risk, requires more minutes in the junior high/middle school week than some school schedules allow. In response, some administrators are reducing offerings in the arts, while others are eliminating homerooms. Concerned about covering a tightly-defined curriculum, only the most creative will find ways to provide the time and personnel essential to service learning programs. An Indiana state mandate, in fact, is what eliminated the activity period at Stony Brook Junior High School in Indianapolis and, with it, the Peer Counselors Program. In this case, at least, the drive for "excellence" has pushed out a popular and appropriate program for young adolescents.

In the two years since the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development issue its Turning Points report, there have been encouraging signs that indicate a more hospitable climate for service learning in some school districts and state departments of education. The strong support for community service in the middle school program voiced in Turning Points has been echoed by a wide variety of influential national bodies, including the National Governors Association, the Council of Chief State School Officers, the National Association of Secondary Schoool Principals, and others.

Much can be learned from the case studies presented in this report. The most obvious lessons are relevant to those interested in developing or improving service learning programs for young adolescents. Additionally, others -- including policy-makers at the federal, state, and local levels; school administrators; community agencies; and teacher training institutions -- must also be involved in creating policies, practices, and attitudes that will encourage the expansion of community service programs for early adolescents. Some recommendations for all of these groups follow.

CHAPTER 5:
RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations

Policy

A national youth policy is long overdue. Those who set policy at the state and national levels -- where education policy is increasingly set -- cannot any longer ignore the needs of our nation's young people. The National and Community Service Act of 1990, passed by Congress and signed by the President, is one step in the right direction, encouraging an ethos of community involvement throughout one's life, and providing some support for school-based service. Policy-makers still must consider:

1. A basic approach to all education and programming -- in and out of school -- that respects and responds to the developmental characteristics and needs of each age group, especially early adolescence.

2. A more comprehensive and less constraining policy than the 1980s epidemic of rules and requirements, which was not policy but a "laundry list."

3. Provision in state and national policy for local flexibility that responds to particular populations, needs, and conditions.

4. Funding to support a changeover to action learning and service learning in the schools, with emphasis on educating the middle grades.

Program Development

Based upon the models presented in this report, program developers and administrators should consider, at a minimum:

1. Appropriate service roles for early adolescents: involve interpersonal relationships; have concrete value to those served; allow for varying levels of commitment; and set clear limits.

2. Key program elements: consistent, well trained, and sensitive adult leaders; training and reflective activities; supervision at the placement site; participation of students with varying abilities and strengths; and public recognition of the youngsters' accomplishments.

3. Likely obstacles: precarious existence; logistical difficulties, especially with scheduling and transportation; and educational reform mandates.

Staffing

Whether service programs are school- or community-based, they require many of the same qualities and skills in their program staff. One of the most critical of these is the ability to be a *facilitator*: a teacher or group leader who can guide, counsel, elicit, hold hands, listen, applaud. The facilitator lets young people make decisions -- and, sometimes, mistakes -- rather than telling them how to do it. Yet the facilitator also provides a safety net, intervening when necessary, and setting appropriate limits -- without taking over. This role, while educational in nature, is very different from that of traditional teacher. Training and practice are therefore crucial for effective program leaders.

In addition, professional training needs to encompass a developmental approach: exploration of the capacities and capabilities of young adolescents rather than emphasis on their deficits.

Teacher training institutions and graduate schools of education should consider:

1. A course of study that provides new and potential teachers with strategies for connecting school and community -- and with opportunities to practice these strategies.

2. Emphasis on experiential learning at all levels -- especially for early adolescence.

3. Required study of human development; rather than a focus on one level (i.e., early childhood, elementary, secondary), examination as well of the stages preceding and following this level.

4. Collaboration with schools in order to place education students in community service practicums and internships where they have opportunities to work with young people and lead discussions or seminars.

Community Agency Programs

Community agencies need to view adolescents not only as "clients," but also as resources: potential adjuncts or aides who can provide as well as receive services. Many existing community agency programs, always strapped for funds, could benefit greatly from the volunteer help of young adolescents, providing there is staff willing and able to supervise and support them.

Agencies with child care programs, for example, could use young adolescents as teacher assistants; those dealing with groups in conflict could involve youngsters as active problem-solvers or mediators.

School-Based Programs

Acknowledging the school's role in nurturing and encouraging appropriate and positive cognitive, social, and ethical development among young adolescents leads to the conclusion that community service programs belong in school.

Policy-makers and school administrators should consider:

1. Integration of community service into the school curriculum, rather than continuing to view it as an "add-on" vulnerable to budgeting and scheduling constraints. Introducing oral histories, or exploring children's books can enrich the language arts, social studies or English class. The science curriculum can include ecology or can connect the study of human biology to a peer education project around substance abuse or to a study of aging. But beyond these possibilities, service learning is cross-disciplinary and can erase the artificial divisions between subject matters in the middle grades. Service programs can demonstrate the inter-relatedness of the disciplines that comprise the middle school curriculum, and thus clarify how classroom learning relates to the world outside the school.

2. Recruitment of students with a mix of abilities -- not only "at-risk" or "stars." Research and experience show that students learn a great deal in mixed ability groups, growing in cognitive as well as social and ethical areas. In addition, in community service programs youngsters are able to show strengths not usually called upon in school.

3. Sequential programs within the school, especially middle schools that start as young as fifth grade, where students begin by helping their peers or younger students and then, with experience, move out into the community.

4. A coordinator of community service -- even on a part-time basis -- who can respond to teacher- or student-initiated requests for curriculum-related placements, head off problems early, provide liaison with community sites, and take care of logistics.

5. Working with local teacher training institutions, colleges, universities, even community colleges, to share coordination and leadership of after-school programs.

The National Center for Service Learning in Early Adolescence

The 1989 Connections survey underlined the need for a clearinghouse and resource center for information, technical assistance, and networking. In March 1991, with major support from the DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund, the National Center for Service Learning in Early Adolescence was established. The Center offers a broad range of services including technical assistance, training and program development, and a variety of resource materials for educators

and policymakers. A detailed database of effective service learning programs for early adolescents is currently being compiled and will be widely available as a resource for teachers, adminstrators, policymakers and others.

The goals of the National Center for Service Learning in Early Adolescence are:

- to provide support and resources to educators and others interested in starting service learning programs for early adolescents;
- to collect information on service learning program models and to provide such information to educators, youth-serving agencies and others;
- to develop and publicize standards of quality for service learning programs;
- to conduct research on service learning programs and their impact on adolescents;
- to utilize the Early Adolescent Helper Program, an already proven model, as a testing ground for innovative programming;
- to advocate, with other organizations on a local and national level, for middle school and community-based service programs for young adolescents.

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Resources

In addition to the programs cited in the foregoing pages, some of the organizations that can provide information on action learning and community service programs and policy are these:

Center for Youth Development and Research
University of Minnesota
386 McNeal Hall
1985 Buford Avenue
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108
612-624-3700
(repository of files of National Commission
on Resources for Youth)

Constitutional Rights Foundation
601 South Kingsley Drive
Los Angeles, California 90005
213-487-5590

Institute for Responsive Education
605 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, Massachusetts 02215
617-353-3309

National Center for Service Learning in Early Adolescence
CASE/CUNY Graduate Center
25 West 43rd Street, Suite 612
New York, NY 10036
212-642-2946, 2947

National Crime Prevention Council
733 15th Street, NW
Suite 540
Washington, DC 20005
202-393-7141

National Society for Internships and Experiential Education
2nd Floor
124 St. Mary's Street
Raleigh, North Carolina 27605
919-834-7536

National Middle School Association
4807 Evanswood Drive
Columbus, Ohio 43229
614-848-8211

National Youth Leadership Council
1910 West County Road B
Roseville, Minnesota 55113
800-366-6952

SerVermont
PO Box 516
Chester, Vermont 05143
802-875-2278

Youth Service America
1319 F Street, NW
Suite 900
Washington, DC 20004
202-783-8855

Youth Service Opportunities Project
15 Rutherford Place
New York, New York 10003
212-598-0873

Service Learning Programs for Early Adolescents
Inquiry Form

The National Center for Service Learning in Early Adolescence is establishing a comprehensive database of service learning programs for early adolescents. Please provide any information that may be useful in tracking programs that give early adolescents the opportunity to contribute to their communities. We will contact schools, districts, community agencies and organizations for more complete data, and select models of different kinds of programs for in-depth description. This will constitute the first step in establishing a valuable resource for those interested in adapting or replicating such programs, and should provide substantial support for developing policy and practice that will promote such programs.

Sponsoring School, District or Agency:

_____

Address_____

_____

Grade levels or ages of participants in program_____

Type of community service_____

Relationship of service program to curriculum_____

Contact Person_____

Person completing this form_____

Organization_____**Telephone(___)**_____

Thank you for your help.